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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 002508

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: IRAQ NATIONAL ASSEMBLY,
GOVERNMENT; BAGHDAD

1. SUMMARY: The major themes in the daily newspapers on June 14 were the questioning of Saddam Hussein by the Iraqi Special Tribunal and developments in the security situation.

END SUMMARY.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1A. " Who Guarantees? " (Al-Sabah, 6/14)
1B. " The Shadows will disappear " (Azzaman, 6/14)

SELECTED COMMENTARIES

- 1A. " Who Guarantees? " (Al-Sabah, 6/14)

Al-Sabah (IMN) published a front-page editorial by Mohammed Abdul-Jabbar about the institutions of the new Iraq:

" The government started a campaign against corruption in addition to its campaign against terrorism. Together these issues represent the greatest dangers facing the political process and reconstruction efforts in Iraq.

Corruption has affected government structures, and although it was inherited from the former Ba'ath regime, the cruel fact is that corruption has increased. So it has been necessary to investigate corruption since April 9, 2003 for the sake of cleansing Iraq's administrative system. In order to enhance the fortunes of all and to encourage citizens to walk on the path of honesty, even the highest levels of government must be investigated.

For that reason the Commission on Public Integrity was founded, but who will guarantee that those who fight corruption will not deviate? Who will guarantee that the new ministers and leaders will not be attracted by money and power and not misuse them?

It is not a matter of personal intentions and political slogans. The truth is that without some procedures and regulations from strong institutions capable of controlling, monitoring, and calling the corrupt to account, there are no guarantees for any official.

Some of these procedures are:

- The officials should reveal their personal and family fortunes before getting an official post; and their incomes should be periodically reviewed.
- Government contracts should obey the principle of transparency and be publicly published by the media.
- Enhance and develop the Commission on Public Integrity's role and maintain its independence.
- Enhance media freedom in order to monitor the government and reveal corruption to the citizens."

- 1B. "The Shadows will disappear" (Azzaman, 6/14)

Azzaman (independent) published a last page editorial by Fatih Abdulsalam about politicians:

"These days in Iraq there are political and personal shadows. Which means there are people here who are controlled by forces other than themselves. These forces are the Americans. Since the people believe that the Americans control the government they will believe that the government will do illegal things and that the ministers in this government will also do illegal things. Behind every Iraqi soldier or policeman there is the shadow of a US or MNF-I battalion.

While there are some politicians who were in the shadows not cooperating with the occupation and suddenly they

decided that the occupation was all right after all. These politicians have emerged from the shadows.

There are two kinds of shadows. One is transparent while the other is dark. Everyone can see what the transparent shadow is doing. He can be stealing or hitting someone and we can see his movements, even if he is hiding in that shadow. The other shadow is doing its business behind closed doors. So we cannot see it and we don't know what it is doing. The Iraqi people have known about these shadows for a long time. They understand that shadows cannot be trusted.

The logic of life, history, and science says that all shadows will eventually disappear. No single shadow can last forever because the earth moves and the shadows change. People also change. Their lives change and because of this they will change their position on issues over time.

If even the people who rely on reality have been changed, what will happen to those who rely on shadows? With no doubt they will fill their hands with the wind."

JEFFREY